

Item 5

REPORT TO COUNCIL

18TH DECEMBER 2008

REPORT OF SOLICITOR TO THE COUNCIL AND MONITORING OFFICER

PORTFOLIO: STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVIEW: PROTECTION OF HISTORIC TRADITIONS AND CEREMONIAL ARRANGEMENTS

1. SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This Report updates the Council following the release of further guidance by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) containing proposals about ceremonial rights, privileges and related matters.
- 1.2 In particular, and following decisions taken by the Durham County Council Cabinet, at its meeting on the 28th August 2008, this Report informs Members of the decision taken as to “local views”, as to how historic traditions are to be protected following the abolition of Sedgefield Borough Council and the transfer of ceremonial and civic property in advance of Vesting Day.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Council is invited to:
 - (1) note the Report.
 - (2) authorise the Chief Executive to enter into appropriate agreements for the transfer of civic property

3. TRANSFER OF PROPERTY

- 3.1 The County Council has accepted local wishes previously expressed, and have accordingly informed DCLG that Sedgefield Town Council would be a suitable candidate to take over the Charter relating to borough status, granted to the Council on the 24th October 1996.
- 3.2 Members have already been appraised that the Sedgefield Town Council have confirmed their agreement to this proposal.
- 3.3 This Council also retains certain civic regalia and seals, formerly held by Darlington Rural District Council, and it is intended to transfer ownership and possession of these items to the Darlington Borough Council prior to the abolition of this Council.

- 3.4 In order to give effect to the transfers of civic property , it is intended that a formal agreement be entered into with the recipient councils to transfer ownership and possession of those items, and authority is requested by this Report for the Chief Executive to enter into an appropriate form of agreement.

4. ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRANSFER CEREMONY

- 4.1 It is considered appropriate, given the auspicious nature of the circumstances, that appropriate ceremonial arrangements be held to celebrate and mark the occasion of the transfer of the civic property to the Sedgefield Town Council and Darlington Borough Council respectively.

5. ARTEFACTS: PROTOCOL

- 5.1 Attention has been drawn to the possibility that it would be useful for Councils, in affected local government review areas, to draw up a protocol to govern arrangements for dealing with artefacts, memorabilia, insignia, etc. currently held by District Councils.
- 5.2 Undoubtedly there will be a wide variety of such items held amongst such Councils. The County Council considered that a protocol could usefully set out some general and practical principles to be adopted for the purposes of settling their future destination and providing some general accountability in that respect.
- 5.3 Members are invited to note therefore that steps are currently being taken to compile records for future reference

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1 Both Sedgefield Town Council and Darlington Borough Council have been consulted regarding appropriate aspects of this Report and the steps proposed.
- 6.2 Both Durham County Council and DCLG are aware of local wishes in connection with Sedgefield Borough Council's Charter and the transfer of property envisaged by this Report.

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Ward(s)

Key Decision Validation

Background Papers

Report to Durham County Council Cabinet - 28th August 2008

Ceremonial Issues arising from Local Government Review

Report to Annual Council - 16th May 2008

Local Government Review Proposals : Implications - Ceremonial Arrangements, etc.

Report to Cabinet - 27th September 2007

Protection of Historic Traditions, etc.

Examination by Statutory Officers

	Yes	Not Applicable
1. The report has been examined by the Council's Head of the Paid Service or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The content has been examined by the Council's S.151 Officer or his representative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3. The content has been examined by the Council's Monitoring Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The report has been approved by Management Team	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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